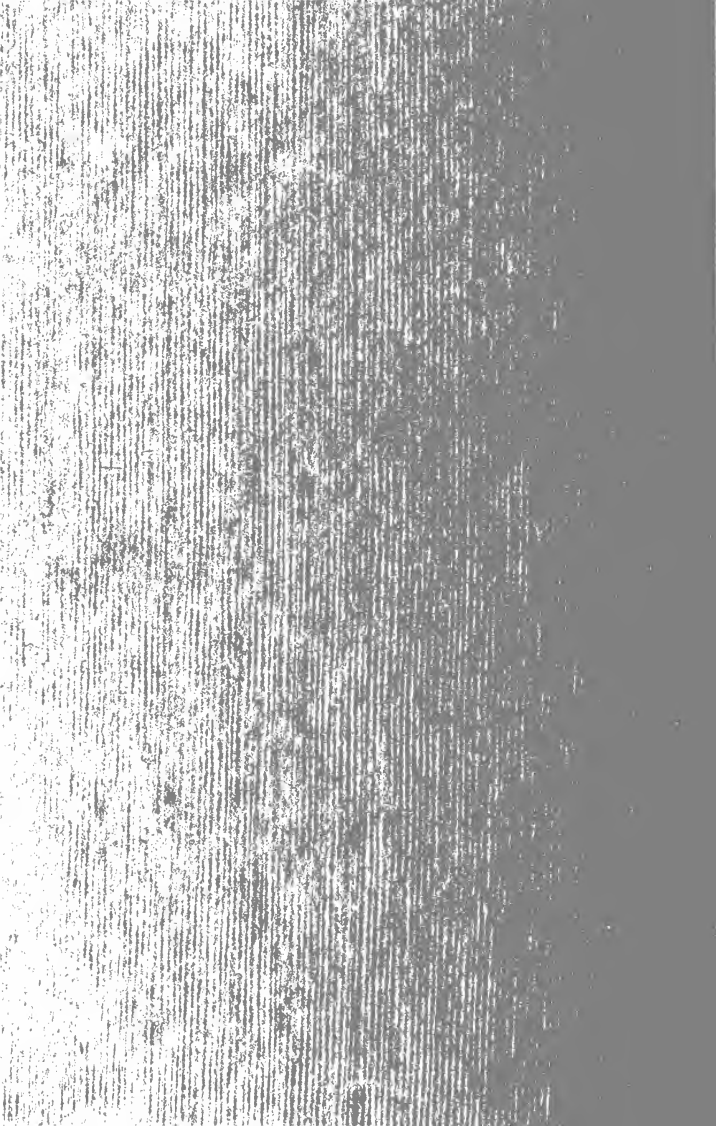


THOUGHTS
FROM R. L.
STEVENSON

WORDS OF HOPE
FROM A HOPEFUL
MAN, COMPILED BY
HAL W. TROVILLION.

PRIVATELY PRINTED
NEW YEARS A. D. MDCCCCVIII





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FOREWORD

A new year has come again and with it clings still that pleasant custom of wishing well our friends and bidding them Godspeed for another twelve-month. But however hopeful and light-hearted we may set out upon the journey, there are sure to come times when we shall be glad to hear words of cheer and encouragement that will strengthen us to keep up the fight. To serve such a mission as this to my friends, is my only purpose in preparing this little brochure. In this great, big, busy world so occupied with other things, and some days so chilly and selfish, we all but lose the very cardinal points of a happy and contented life. As Wordsworth has told us

"The world is too much with
us, late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay
waste to our powers."

In these few selected thoughts of the ever hopeful Stevenson, I trust there will be found sufficient consolation during the cloudy days to carry the most despondent far into the land of clear skies and sunshine

~~FAL~~ ROVILLION

THE future is nothing;
but the past is my-
self, my own history, the
seed of my present
thoughts, the mould of
my present disposition.
It is not in vain that I re-
turn to the nothings of my
childhood; for every one
of them has left some
stamp upon me or put
some fetter on my boasted
free will. In the past is
my present fate; and in
the past, also, is my real
life.

"A Retrospect"

THE day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating concerns and duties. Help us to play the man, help us to perform them with laughter and kind faces, let cheerfulness abound with industry. Give us to go blithely on our business all this day, bring us to our resting beds weary and content and un-dishonored, and grant us in the end the gift of sleep.

"Prayers"

OUR guard is relieved;
the service of the day
is over, and the hour come
to rest. We resign into
Thy hands our sleeping
bodies, our cold hearths
and open doors. Give us
to awake with smiles,
give us to labour smiling.
As the sun returns in the
east, so let our patience
be renewed with dawn; as
the sun lightens the world,
so let our loving-kindness
make bright this house of
our habitation.

"Prayers"

IN his own life, then, a man is not to expect happiness, only to profit by it gladly when it shall arise; he is on duty here; he knows not how or why, and does not need to know; he knows not for what hire, and must not ask. Somehow or other, though he does not know what goodness is, he must try to be good: somehow or other, though he cannot tell what will do it, he must try to give happiness to others.

"A Christmas Sermon"

A HAPPY man or woman is a better thing to find than a five-pound note. He or she is a radiating focus of goodwill; and their entrance into a room is as though another candle had been lighted. We need not care whether they could prove the forty-seventh proposition! They do a better thing than that, they practically demonstrate the great theorem of the liveableness of life.

"An Apology for Idlers"

TO be honest, to be kind,
to earn a little and to
spend a little less, to make
upon the whole a family
happier for his presence,
to renounce when that
shall be necessary and not
to be embittered, to keep a
few friends, but these
without capitulation—
above all, on the same
grim conditions, to keep
friends with himself—here
is a task for all that a man
has of fortitude and
delicacy.

"A Christmas Sermon"

EACH man should learn what is within him, that he may strive to mend * * * *. It can never be wrong to tell him the truth; for, in his disputable state, weaving as he goes his theory of life, steering himself, cheering or reproving others, all facts are of the first importance to his conduct: and even if a fact shall discourage or corrupt him, it is still best that he should know it; for it is in this world as it is, and not in a world made easy by educational suppression, that he must win his way to shame or glory.

*"The Morality of the
Profession of Letters"*

LOOK back now, for a moment, on your own brief experience of life; and although you lived it feelingly in your own person, and had every step of conduct burned in by pains and joys upon your memory, tell me what definite lesson does experience hand on from youth to manhood, or from both to age? The settled tenor which first strikes the eye is but the shadow of a delusion. This is gone; that never truly was; and you yourself are altered beyond recognition. Times and men and circumstances chinge about your changing character, with a speed of which no earthly hurrican affords an image. What was the best yesterday, is it still the best in this changed theatre of a tomorrow? Will your own past truly guide you in your own violent and unexpected future? And if this be questionable, with what humble, with what hopeless eyes should we not watch other men driving beside us on their unknown careers, seeing with unlike eyes, impelled by different gales, doing and suffering in another sphere of things?

—"Lay Morals."



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